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# The Unabridged Version of Tribes of the Carolina Lowland: Pedee - Sewee - Winyaw - Waccamaw - Cape Fear - Congaree - Wateree - Santee

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TRIBES OF THE CAROLINA LOWLAND

Pedee-Sewee-Winyaw-Waccamaw-Cape  
Fear-Congaree-Wateree-Santee

Stanley South

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Institute of Archeology and Anthropology

University of South Carolina

April 1972



TRIBES OF THE CAROLINA LOWLAND  
Pedee-Sewee-Winyaw-Waccamaw-Cape Fear-Congaree-Wateree-Santee

Stanley South

These eight tribes are presumed to be Siouan on the basis of scant linguistic evidence and on the basis of association with known Siouan groups (Mooney 1894:64-67, 76-81; Swanton 1922:17). They occupied the high ground and bottomland fields along the rivers and tributaries that carry the tribal names from southeastern North Carolina to the fall-line at Columbia, South Carolina. This lowland area of the Atlantic coastal plain was characterized by pine forest with palmetto, as well as oak, maple, ash, walnut, poplar, bay, birch, beech, holly, chinquapin, and other hardwoods, with cypress dominating the swamps along the rivers (Harriss 1952:4-25; Hudson 1970:19; Salley 1959:47). Although these tribes shared a similar environmental base in their "riverine agriculture," gathering of forest products, and seasonal hunting, there were differences among them based on their geographic relationship to the Muskogean Cusabo on the South Carolina coast south of the Santee River, or to the Creeks to the southwest of them (Swanton 1922:31; Hudson 1970:10-15). To the north of the Cape Fear Indians were the Woccon, a definitely identified Siouan tribe, providing a geographical clue for including the adjacent Cape Fear in the Siouan classification (Mooney 1894:64-66).

A critical consideration in evaluating the documents relating to the tribes of the South Carolina coast is the identification of the "River Jordan." Swanton (1922:35) states that it was the Santee

with "scarcely the shadow of a doubt." However, Quattlebaum (1956: 20-21) has presented convincing evidence that the "River Jordan" was the Cape Fear. If this is the case, then the 1526 Spanish settlement of Allyon at "San Miguel de Gualdape" was located not near the mouth of the Savannah River as suggested by Swanton, but near the mouth of the Waccamaw River across Winyah Bay from Georgetown, South Carolina (Swanton 1922:40; Quattlebaum 1956:23). If this were the case then Oviedo's description of the large mat-covered communal house was for the area of the mouth of the Waccamaw and Santee Rivers, and not in a definite Muskogean area as stated by Swanton (1922:48). This 1526 description by Oviedo is as follows:

On some of the small islands on the coast there are certain mosques or temples of those idolatrous people and many remains [bones] of their dead, those of the elders apart from those of the young people or children. They look like the ossuaries or burying places of the common people; the bodies of their principal people are in temples by themselves or in little chapels in another community and also on little islands. And those houses or temples have walls of stone and mortar (which mortar they make of oyster shells) and they are

about one estado and a half in height, the rest of the building above this wall being made of wood (pine). There are many pines there. There are several principal houses all along the coast and each one of them must be considered by those people to be a village, for they are very big and they are constructed of very tall and beautiful pines, leaving the crown of leaves at the top. After having set up one row of trees to form one wall, they set up the opposite side, leaving a space between the two sides of from 15 to 30 feet, the length of the walls being 300 or more feet. As they intertwine the branches at the top and so in this manner there is no need for a tiled roof or other covering, they cover it all with matting interwoven between the logs where there may be hollows or open places. Furthermore they can cross those beams with other [pines] placed lengthwise on the inside, thus increasing the thickness of their walls. In this way the wall is thick and strong, because the beams are very close together. In each one of those

houses there is easily room enough for 200 men and in Indian fashion they can live in them, placing the opening for the door where it is most convenient (Swanton 1922: 48).

The important point here is the fact that these large houses were found "all along the coast," indicating that this trait was shared by the coastal groups regardless of their Siouan or Muskogean affiliation. A verification for this type structure is seen in the 1664 account of William Hilton, wherein he described a "great house" on Port Royal Island.

That which we noted there, was a fair house builded in the shape of a Dove-house, round, two hundred foot at least, compleatly covered with Palmeta-leaves, the wal-plate being twelve foot high, or thereabouts, and within lodging Rooms and forms; two pillars at the entrance of a high Seat above all the rest (Salley 1959:41):

These huge houses from two to three hundred feet across were unlike those reported from the later period or from any of the other tribes under consideration here, likely representing a particular Carolina coastal Muskogean culture pattern. This is only a single clue to illustrate the cultural differences that may have obtained between these tribes.



On the westernmost extent of the area on higher ground than the lowland tribes, we find the Congaree described by Lawson as "kind and affable to the English," but varying considerably in their physical appearance as well as in their speech, with the Congaree women being as handsome as most he had seen (Harriss 1952:25). The Congaree and Wateree understood not one another's speech, though they both later joined the Catawba (Williams 1930:236). The Wateree Chickanee Indians he found living in "dark smoky Holes as ever I saw any Indians dwell in." This tribe he found to be very poor in English goods with bows and arrows instead of guns still being used by several of the Wateree. There was a marked contrast between the Wateree and the Waxhaw located only three miles away who considered the Wateree a poor sort of Indian not capable of properly entertaining Lawson and his group (Harriss 1952:29). The Waxhaw attitude and the description Lawson gives of this "flat head" tribe reveals that they had a cultural tradition in marked contrast to the Wateree, one more characteristic of the southern chiefdoms and the Cherokee than the Siouan tribes, yet they are considered among the Siouans (Hudson 1970:15, 26-27). From these and other clues it is clear that a specific cultural reference to one of the Siouan groups would not necessarily apply to the others and that only the most general statements might be considered to be validly applied to all the eight tribes listed here.

Also to be considered is the two hundred year gap that separates some of the references to the same tribal group. Can documents

revealing cultural similarities be interpreted to reflect the same phenomenon when the documents are separated by many years of time? We are tempted to compare culture traits on a one to one basis when we are dealing with tribes of the same time period, but this too is an unsound approach to cultural analysis. An example of this problem is seen in the statement of John Lederer relative to the Wateree when he found them living on the upper Yadkin River in northern North Carolina in 1670 when compared with a very similar statement regarding the Santee made by John Lawson in 1701. Lederer stated of the Wateree, "This nation differs in government from all the other Indians of these parts: for they are slaves, rather than subjects to their king" (Lederer 1902:19). Lawson said of the Santee king that he was "the most absolute Indian Ruler in these Parts, although he is Head but of a small People,...He can put any of his People to Death that hath committed any Fault which he judges worthy of so great a Punishment" (Harriss 1952:16). The common bond here is the fact that in both instances the trait of extremely centralized authority is seen as an unusual cultural pattern, one not shared by the other Siouan tribes in the neighborhood. We make cultural generalizations regarding these lowland Carolina tribes based on one or two good descriptive statements specifically applicable to one tribe due to the absence of more abundant data. We should keep in mind, however, that such generalizations cannot then be used as a specific description of the culture of any one tribe.

### Subsistence

In 1664 Hilton was supplied with great store of mullet, bass, shad, and other fish by the Cape Fear Indians. He also found that they had large quantities of acorns and cornfields with stalks as large as he had seen anywhere. They were also raising cattle and hogs left by earlier settlers (Salley 1959:45-53). Carteret in 1670 in the Sewee area described a pounded thickening which was cooked and dried into bread as well as hickory nuts and root cakes (Salley 1959:117). In 1682 Thomas Ashe stated that the South Carolina Indians had a diet of fish, flesh, and fowl with Indian corn and water (Salley 1959:156). At a Santee Indian's cabin Lawson in 1701 found Indian peas, beans, oil, chinquapins, corn, barbecued peaches, and peach bread made into loaves like barley cakes and eaten by slicing and soaking in water (Harriss 1952:13). The Congaree also had peaches, corn, and chinquapin and hickory nuts which they beat between two great stones, sifted, and used to thicken their venison broth. They also gathered blackberries and ate deer, turkey, possum, and fish (Harriss 1952:25).

Throughout his journey through the area of these tribes, Lawson reports large flocks of turkeys which was a main item of diet for his party as well as the Indians who also ate cranes and geese. The Congaree were found to be raising cranes as tame as barnyard fowl. The Congaree men had all gone hunting when Lawson visited the town (Harriss 1952:12, 23-25). Their method may have been one of the two he witnessed among the Sewee where he observed the cane swamps being

fired to drive out the deer, bear, and turkeys. In the same area near the mouth of the Santee River, raccoons and wild hogs were eaten as well as oysters, conch, clams, and other shell fish. The area also furnished turtles, fish, and fowl such as curlew, gull, gannet, pelican, duck, mallard, geese, swan, teal, widgeon, etc. (Harriss 1952:4-5).

The Santee Indians had barbecued venison as well as venison torn to pieces with the teeth and then "beaten to rags" in a mortar and stewed with water, corn, peas, a possum, and other ingredients to make a curious but savory dish (Harriss 1952:13, 21). The Santee used an artificial deer head to conceal themselves while hunting, a practice that sometime proved hazardous.

They are made of the Head of a Buck, the back Part of the Horns being scrapt and hollow for Lightness of Carriage. The Skin is left to the setting on the Shoulders, which is lined all around with Small Hoops, and flat Sort of Laths, to hold it open for the Arm to go in. They have a Way to preserve the Eyes, as if living. The Hunter puts on a Match-coat made of Deer's Skin, with the Hair on, and a Piece of the white Part of the Deer's Skin that grows on the Breast, which is fastened to the Neck-End of this stalking Head, so hangs down. In

these Habiliments an Indian will go as near a Deer as he pleases, the exact Motions and Behavior of a Deer being so well counterfeited by them, that several Times it hath been known for two Hunters to come up with a stalking Head together, and unknown to each other, so that they have killed an Indian instead of a Deer, which hath happened sometimes to be a Brother or some Dear Friend; for which Reason they allow not of that Sort of Practice where the Nation is populous (Harriss 1952:18).

From these descriptions it is evident that the Indians utilized the agricultural products in season and stored these and forest products for winter use. They also utilized the fish, shell fish, and other river products as they were available. Hunting of deer, turkey, possum, polecat, raccoon, rabbit, squirrels, bear, beaver, and other animals was carried out as needed, with organized hunts being carried out in January when witnessed by Lawson. The percentage of meat to fish to gathered products to agricultural products no doubt varied seasonally with availability. The abundance of food among the Indians was such that the early English colonists depended on the Indians to supply their needs, sometimes to the point of severely depleting their surplus. The 1670 Charles Towne colonists were no exception and depended on the Santee, Sewee, Winyaw, and

other friendly tribes to supply enough food to allow the English to survive that first hard winter in Carolina (Cheves 1897:178, 201, 334).

#### Architecture, Settlement Pattern

The large communal coastal houses discussed previously were not mentioned for the Cape Fear Indians visited by Hilton in 1664, rather he spoke of pulling down an Indian hut and tearing the deerskins and mats in pieces (Salley 1959:50). Hilton also used the word "plantation" in reference to the Cape Fear Indians; the same designation often used by Lawson to describe the settlements along his route through South Carolina. He said that among the Santee settlement there were plantations "lying scattering here and there, for a great many Miles" (Harriss 1952:13). At the Congaree he spoke of the one town having not above a dozen houses "having other straggling Plantations up and down the Country" (Harriss 1952:24). This pattern appears to have been general among the tribes considered here.

Lawson was not impressed by the "dark smoky Holes" of the Wateree Chickanee, usually referring to Indian dwellings as "Wigwams, or Cabins." He says they had a smoke hole in the roof and that they were "as hot as Stoves" and full of fleas.

The Bark they make their Cabins withal,  
is generally Cypress, or red or white Cedar;  
and sometimes, when they are a great way  
from any of these Woods, they make use of

Pine-Bark, which is the worser sort. In building these Fabricks, they get very long Poles of Pine, Cedar, Hiccory, or any other Wood that will bend; these are the Thickness of the Small of a Man's Leg, at the thickest end, which they generally strip of the Bark, and warm them well in the Fire, which makes them tough and fit to bend. Afterwards, they stick the thickest ends of them in the Ground, about two Yards asunder, in a Circular Form, the distance they design the Cabin to be (which is not always round, but sometimes oval) then they bend the Tops and bring them together, and bind their ends with Bark of Trees, that is proper for that use, as Elm is, or sometimes the Moss that grows on the Trees, and is a Yard or two long, and never rots; then they brace them with other Poles to make them strong; afterwards cover them all over with Bark, so that they are very warm and tight, and will keep firm against all the Weathers that blow. They have other sorts of Cabins without Windows, which are for their Granaries, Skins and Merchandizes, and others that are

covered overhead; the rest left open for the Air. These have Reed-Hurdles, like Tables, to lie and sit on, in Summer, and serve for pleasant Banqueting-Houses in the hot Season of the Year. The Cabins they dwell in have Benches all round, except where the Door stands on these they lay Beast-Skins, and Mats made of Rushes, whereon they sleep and loll. In one of these several Families commonly live, though all related to one another (Harriss 1952:187-188).

Once he reached the Waxhaw, only three miles from the Wateree, Lawson noticed that the house pattern changed to a "large and light-some Cabin, the like I have not met withal," and from here to Sapona Town on the Yadkin he would see Indian towns with "State-Houses" thatched with "sedge and Rushes," something he had not witnessed until he reached the Waxhaw town (Harriss 1952:29, 33, 37).

When visiting the Santee Lawson described a granary, with some detail, in which they stored grain, skins, and merchandise.

These Santee-Indians are a well humored and affable People; and living near the English, are become very tractable. They make themselves Cribs after a very curious Manner, wherein they secure their Corn from



Vermin, which are more frequent in these warm  
Climates than Countries more distant from the  
Sun. These pretty Fabrics are commonly sup-  
ported with eight Feet or Posts about seven  
Foot high from the Ground, well daubed within  
and without upon Laths, with Loom or Clay,  
which makes them tight and fit to keep out  
the smallest Insect, there being a small Door  
at the gable End, which is made of the same  
Composition, and to be removed at Pleasure,  
being no bigger than that a slender Man may  
creep in at, cementing the Door up with the  
same Earth when they take Corn out of the  
Crib, and are going from Home always finding  
their Granaries in the same Posture they  
left them: Theft to each other being alto-  
gether unpracticed, never receiving Spoils  
but from Foreigners (Harriss 1952:12, 187).

The structures built by the Carolina lowland tribes varied from  
the huge communal coastal buildings thatched with palmetto to the  
round cypress bark covered "cabins" further inland to the "dark smoky  
Holes" of the Wateree Chickanee to the west. Of particular interest  
is the abrupt change to the "lightsome Cabin" of the Waxhaw, only  
three miles away. This and other differences reported for the  
Waxhaw clearly indicate the edge of a culture area, an area where

the Catawba were the major buffer tribe between the Carolina low-land tribes and the Creek and Cherokee (Hudson 1970:15-28).

### Attire

When the Charles Towne expedition landed in Sewee country in 1670, they found the Indians wearing deerskin robes with the women wearing robes of moss (Salley 1959:117). When Lawson visited the Santee, he found an Indian physician wearing a match coat made of turkey feathers. Such coats sometimes had "several pretty figures wrought in Feathers" like the deepest silk shag and were used as bed quilts on occasion (Harriss 1952:13, 202). The Santee also made girdles, sashes, and garters of woven possum hair (Harriss 1952:18).

In 1682 Thomas Ashe provided us with a physical description of South Carolina Indians and something of their culture.

The Natives of the Country are from  
time immemorial, ab Origine Indians, of a  
deep Chesnut Colour, their Hair black and  
streight, tied various ways, sometimes oyl'd  
and painted, stuck through with Feathers  
for Ornament or Gallantry; their Eyes black  
and sparkling, little or no Hair on their  
Chins, well limb'd and featured, painting  
their Faces with different Figures of a  
red or sanguine Colour, whether for Beauty  
or to render themselves formidable to their

Enemies I could not learn. They are excellent Hunters; their Weapons the Bow and Arrow, made of a Reed, pointed with sharp Stones, or Fish Bones; their Cloathing Skins of the Bear or Deer, the Skin drest after their Country Fashion.

Manufactures, or Arts amongst them I have heard of none, only little Baskets made of painted Reeds and Leather drest sometimes with black and red Chequers coloured. In Medicine, or Nature of Simples, some have an exquisite Knowledge; and in the Cure of Scorbutick, Venereal, and Malignant Distempers are admirable: In all External Diseases they suck the part affected with many Incantations, Philtres and Charms: In Amorous Intrigues they are excellent either to procure Love or Hatred: They are not very forward in Discovery of their Secrets, which by long Experience are religiously transmitted and conveyed in a continued Line from one Generation to another, for which those skill'd in this Faculty are held in great Veneration and Esteem. Their Religion

chiefly consists in the Adoration of the Sun and Moon: At the Appearance of the New Moon I have observed them with open extended Arms then folded, with inclined Bodies, to make their Adorations with much Ardency and Passion: They are divided into many Divisions or Nations, Govern'd by Reguli, or Petty Princes, which our English call Cacicoes (Salley 1959:156).

#### Disposal of the Dead

For the Santee, Lawson provides us with an excellent description of the burial practice.

The manner of their Interment is thus: A Mole or Pyramid of Earth is raised, the Mould thereof being worked very smooth and even, sometimes higher or lower, according to the Dignity of the Person whose Monument it is. On the Top thereof is an Umbrella, made Ridgeways, like the Roof of an House, this is supported by nine Stakes, or small Posts, the Grave being about six or eight Foot in Length and four foot in Breadth; about it is hung Gourds, Feathers, and other such like Trophies, placed there by the dead Man's Relations, in respect to

him in the Grave. The other Part of the Funeral-Rites are thus: As soon as the Party is dead, they lay the Corps upon a Piece of Bark in the Sun, seasoning or embalming it with a small Root beaten to Powder, which looks as red as Vermillion; the same is mixed with Bear's Oil to beautify the hair, and preserve their Heads from being lousy, it growing plentifully in these Parts of America. After the Carcass has laid a Day or two in the Sun, they remove and lay it upon Crotches cut on purpose, for the Support thereof from the Earth, then they annoint it all over with the forementioned Ingredients of the Powder of this Root and Bear's Oil. When it is so done, they cover it very exactly over with Bark of the Pine, or Ciprus Tree to prevent any Rain to fall upon it, sweeping the Ground very clean all about it. Some of his nearest of Kin brings all the temporal Estate he was possessed of at his Death, as Guns, Bows and Arrows, Beads, Feathers, Match-Coat, &c. This Relation is the chief Mourner, being clad in Moss and a Stick in his Hand, keeping a mournful

Ditty for three or four Days, his Face being black with Smoak of Pitch Pine mingled with Bear's Oil. All the while he tells the dead Man's Relations, and the rest of the Spectators, who that dead Person was, and of the great Feats performed in his Lifetime; all what he speaks, tending to the praise of the Defunct. As soon as the Flesh grows mellow and will cleave from the Bone, they get it off and burn it, making all the Bones very clean, then annoint them with the Ingredients aforesaid, wrapping up the Skull (very carefully) in a Cloath artificially woven of Possom's Hair. (These Indians make Girdles, Sashes, Garters, &c., after the same Manner.) The Bones they carefully preserve in a wooden Box, every Year oiling and cleansing them. By these Means preserve them for many Ages, that you may see an Indian in Possession of the Bones of his Grand-father, or some of his Relations of a larger Antiquity. They have other Sorts of Tombs as where an Indian is slain, in that very Place they make a Heap of

Stones, (or Sticks where Stones are not to be found) to this Memorial, every Indian that passes by, adds a Stone to augment the Heap, in Respect to the deceased Hero.  
(Harriss 1952:17-18).

### Tribal Organization

Tribal leaders were called kings or cassiques with some tribes having four or five such men. In 1671 Maurice Mathews explained the power of these kings to Lord Ashley: "the power of these Cassikaes I must say..is no more (scarce as much) as we owne to ye Topakin [family head] in England, or A grauer person than our selues; I finde noe tributaries among them, butt intermariages & pouerty causeth them to visitt one Another" (Cheves 1897:334). Lawson says the kings are assisted in making decisions by much discussion from their councilmen, which is a contrast with what he reported for the Santee king and what Lederer reported for the Wateree 30 years before (Harriss 1952:16-17, 206).

There is clearly a difference between the tribal organization and priestly conjurations represented by the "Kings," "Doctors," and "Conjurers" Lawson saw among the Carolina lowland Indians and the "Kings," "Grandeas," "War-Captains," and the elaborate ceremonialism carried out in the "State-House" among the Waxhaw. The more elaborate ceremonialism and other cultural traits first seen by Lawson among the Waxhaw, and northward, are clearly traits of the Creek and the southern chiefdom tradition (Hudson 1970:11-28). The

autocratic power of the Wateree and Santee kings might be hypothesized as representing a response of a traditional egalitarian culture to influences from the more elaborate tribal organization of the southern chiefdoms were it not for the fact they were located in an area with prehistoric temple mound ceremonial centers. This fact would suggest that the tribes in this area may well represent beneficiaries of a southern chiefdom tradition. The Santee might well be seen as representing such a descent group, but not the Wateree. The Waxhaw would come much nearer to our preconceived expectations as a cultural descent candidate from a prehistoric southern chiefdom. Perhaps the movement of the Wateree from South Carolina to the upper Yadkin put them out of touch with the major cultural flow of a critical time, so that by the time they again entered their old area they made quite a contrast to the Waxhaw. These problems clearly indicate the need for extensive archeological work in the Carolina lowland area before many questions can be answered. Hudson has pointed to the inconclusive nature of the linguistic classification of all eight of the tribes under consideration here (Hudson 1970:15). The documents indicate that these tribes were culturally different (and to some considerable degree at times) from the Waxhaw and other Carolina Piedmont tribes to the north, yet the archeological clues we do have point to a prehistoric southern chiefdom dominated culture from Charleston on a line north to Santee, Camden, and Town Creek in North Carolina where Coe has outlined the archeologically derived Pee Dee Focus



(Coe 1952:308). Perhaps the Santee represented the nuclear remnant descent group from the prehistoric southern chiefdom tradition along the Santee River. From Lawson's description we know that the Santee and their neighbors were different from the Waxhaw and their neighbors, the Catawbas, but this difference is seen as one of degree. The present archeological indications are that southern chiefdom ceremonial centers at Charleston, Santee, Camden, and Town Creek in North Carolina had a similar cultural base. This prehistoric cultural frontier cuts across the historic linguistic classification which includes the Carolina lowland tribes with the Waxhaw, Catawba, and other Carolina Piedmont groups. The area of the easternmost tribe, the Cape Fear, is characterized archeologically by cord and fabric impressed pottery with the complicated stamped pottery characteristic of the ceremonial centers being almost nonexistent (South 1960:64-65). This fact has nothing to do with the classification of the Cape Fear Indians as probably Eastern Siouan along linguistic lines. It does illustrate the fact that within the area of these eight tribes there was a more dramatic cultural diversity at the late prehistoric level than is seen during the historic period, though some cultural difference is seen to exist between the Carolina lowland tribes and their Piedmont relatives.

## War

During the third quarter of the seventeenth century, the documents reveal that the coastal South Carolina Indians were afraid of "ye very footstep of a Westoe," a tribe living on the Savannah River who were said to be man-eaters. They warred on many tribes and raided for slaves and were involved in a war with the young South Carolina colony. They were brought under control in 1681 by the Savannas, and their threat to the Carolina Lowland Indians ended (Cheves 1897:66, 334, 461). The documents prior to 1695 do not mention fortified towns among the Carolina Lowland Indians, but a map of that date illustrates the site of a "Sewe Indian Fort" and a circle possibly representing palisades, marking a "Santee Indian Fort" (Thornton and Morden 1695). It is interesting to note that Lawson does not mention palisaded towns among the Carolina lowland tribes. If the towns were palisaded against the Westo earlier, they were apparently not so in 1701, no doubt reflecting the security felt by these tribes in their close association with the South Carolina settlement at Charleston.

#### Period of Spanish Contact and Exploration 1521-1609

The ethnographic data from this period is slight regarding specific reference to the tribes under consideration here. The description by Oviedo of separate burial areas for the principal people and young and children, and of the mat covered communal houses of great size is the best account we have from this period. The taking of Indians as slaves during this time no doubt contributed toward attitude formation among those tribes most affected. This period resulted in the "Spaniardization" of Indian tribes all along the Carolina coast, so that by the time the English arrived Spanish words were common among the Indians, and Spanish goods were distributed over a wide area.

#### Period of English Exploration and Settlement 1662-1670

The English explorers were well received by the Indians and continually looked to them for supplies for their expeditions and settlements. The Indians were anxious to have the English settle among them to help protect them from their enemies and enthusiastically offered their services in proposed expeditions against the Spanish and their Indian allies. The egalitarian nature of the tribes in the Charles Towne area, and the limited power of the tribal leaders is made clear in references from this period. A great house or rotunda was described by Hilton south of the area at Port Royal, which may be the equivalent in that area for the large 30 by 300 foot structure reported by Oviedo almost a

century and a half earlier. The nearest archeological parallel for such a rotunda is seen in that excavated at the Irene Mound Site at the mouth of the Savannah River (Caldwell and McCann 1941:30-31, Plate 12). The English explorers and settlers of this period clearly reveal the seasonal hunting-gathering-agricultural subsistence base for the coastal Carolina Indians. Capture of Indians as slaves continued.

Period of Cooperative Exploitation, Acculturation, and Reduction  
1670-1715

With a foothold firmly established at Charles Towne in 1670, the friendly tribes continued to supply food and furs for the English needs. This is the period of greatest documentary information, particularly Lawson's visit of 1701, followed by the Tuscarora War of 1711 and the Yamassee War of 1715. Those tribes closest to the English benefited most by this contact, so friction was seldom encountered during the early years of the Charles Towne settlement. Exporting Indians as slaves continued, with a war with the Winyaw being instigated by some dealers in 1683 as an excuse to obtain slaves. The Indians took part in this trade, with the Congaree in 1693 raiding the Cherokee for captives to be sold as slaves.

From Lawson we learn many details regarding the tribes along the Santee River and its tributaries, and from his account a cultural change is seen to take place separating the Carolina lowland tribes from those along the Wateree River and northward, best represented by the Waxhaw who embodied many traits associated with

the southern chiefdoms and the Cherokee. The Carolina lowland tribes are hypothesized as representing a blend of cultural traits, with fewer classic traits of the southern chiefdoms represented.

Friendly relations continued between the colonists and the Indians with mutual exploitation through trade, particularly with those tribes nearest the English settlements, until the time of the Tuscarora War in 1711. Barnwell took with him many members of the tribes in South Carolina on his expedition against the Tuscarora, though quite a few were interested primarily in plunder. Through the listing of allied tribes accompanying Barnwell under various capitans we are able to make interpretations as to which tribes were politically allied, and it is by this means that some of the tribes are associated linguistically.

Reduction of Indian populations through smallpox and other diseases was a serious blow prior to the Yamassee War, and reduction of the Sewee occurred as a result of an abortive effort at by-passing the middle man in trade with England, when many of the tribe lost their lives at sea and others picked up and sold as slaves by a passing vessel.

#### The Climax of Reduction - The Yamassee War 1715-1716

In 1715 most of the tribes previously friendly to the English in the Carolina lowland joined the Yamassee in their war on the colonists, and as a result their populations were drastically reduced. The Waccamaw and Cape Fear were attacked by Maurice Moore

in 1715, subdued, and many captives taken.

#### The Period of Assimilation 1716-1755

Those tribes who came to the English and renewed friendship after the Yamassee War became involved in the fur trade, and several trading houses were established among them. The Waccamaw continued their resentment from the war, and in 1718 a war with them further reduced their numbers. They moved up the Pee Dee River far from the settlements, though as late as 1755 they were occasionally seen in the settlements. The Wateree, Congaree, and some of the Pedee joined with the Catawba, where they formed dialects of that group as late as 1743. One part of the Pedee continued to live in the settlements as late as 1752, along with some of the Cape Fear Indians. Some tribes such as the Santee, Sewee, and Winyaw apparently disappeared, the survivors apparently becoming assimilated into the culture of the English settlements.

TRIBES OF THE CAROLINA LOWLAND

Pedee-Sewee-Winyaw-Waccamaw-Cape Fear-Congaree-Wateree-Santee

Stanley South

Orthography\*

Pedee comes to sound like pi·<sup>ˈ</sup>ri, "something good," or pi·<sup>ˈ</sup>həre "smart," "expert," "capable," whence ye pi·<sup>ˈ</sup>həre, "people clever" (Speck 1935:220).

Sewee In Catawba can be made out the form ye səwi·<sup>ˈ</sup>həre, "playing people," though the meaning is founded solely on its etymological reconstruction. Si·<sup>ˈ</sup>wi· also denotes a flower or blossom. Gatschet thought the term connected with Catawba Sāwe<sup>ˈ</sup> "island" (Speck 1935:221).

Winyaw Nothing known.

Waccamaw Nothing known.

Cape Fear Nothing known.

Congaree is evidently a corruption of Catawba i·swə<sup>ˈ</sup>ʔ kərə<sup>ˈ</sup>həre, "(river) deep" (Speck 1935:220).

Wateree The river name...has an assignable meaning in the [Catawba] language, namely (i·swə<sup>ˈ</sup>ʔ) watərə<sup>ˈ</sup>ʔ həre, "(river) banks washed away." The name is indeed an appropriate one. Were we to secure the full proper name of the people of such a river in the Catawba language, it would be ye i·swə<sup>ˈ</sup>ʔ watərə<sup>ˈ</sup>ʔ həre, as from waterə<sup>ˈ</sup>ʔ, "to float on the water," "people (of the) river of banks washed away" (Speck 1935:221).

Santee is beyond question derived from i·swə<sup>ˈ</sup>ti·, "the river," or "river is there" (Speck 1935:220).

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\*Quoted from Speck 1935:220-221.

## Pedee

The small Pedee tribe, apparently Siouan, was unknown to the English until the beginning of the eighteenth century. Maps of the early eighteenth century place them on the east side of the Pee Dee River, probably in the area between the later towns of Florence and Marion, South Carolina, where the community of Pee Dee preserves the name (Barnwell 1909:33; Herbert 1725; Hodge 1910:222; Mosely 1733).

Barnwell had with him 18 Pedees when he marched against the Tuscarora in 1711, in a company with Waterees, Winyaws, Cape Fears, and other Siouan groups (Salley 1908:31). In the Yamassee War of 1715, the Pedee joined the Sewee, Santee, Congaree, and other Siouan tribes against the English and suffered considerably as a result (Milling 1969:225). By the following year they had concluded a peace with the government of South Carolina, and a trading house was built for the purpose of trade with the Pedee and Waccamaw at "Uauenee" or "Your Enee" at the junction of the Pee Dee and Waccamaw Rivers (McDowell 1955:80, 96, 111, 132, 174, 208).

In 1732 a Pedee Indian was murdered, and official notice was taken toward insuring justice in the matter. In 1743 the Governor of South Carolina presented gifts to a group of visiting Pedee Indians, and the following year Natchez Indians were living with the Pedee, some of whom had murdered seven Catawba. Because the Catawba sought revenge, the Pedee and Natchez moved closer to the English settlements for protection (Gregg 1867:8-11). In 1746 the



governor urged the Pedee and Cheraw, who had long lived with the Catawba, to continue to live with them. By 1752, however, a large number of Pedee were still living among the settlements, and the governor and the Catawba urged them to join the Catawba (Gregg 1867:11-14). In 1755 Lewis Jones, chief of the Pedee, reported that two Pedee women had been scalped and two boys carried away by five Cherokees and one Natchez Indian (Gregg 1867:15-16; McDowell 1970:86-87). Whether the Pedee living in the settlements ever moved in with those of their tribe who had long before joined the Catawba we do not know. One clue points to the Pedee, led by Lewis Jones, joining the remnant of the Cape Fear in eastern South Carolina, where only a half-breed woman remained in 1808 (Milling 1969:230).

#### Sewee

This tribe, thought to be Siouan, occupied the area between the Santee and Wando Rivers in what is now South Carolina (Swanton 1922:17-18; 1946:182). When Ayllon's Captain Gordillo explored the area in 1521, one of the natives he captured was called Francisco de Chicora, who spoke of a province known as Xoxi (Shoshi), possibly the Sewee (Swanton 1922:37; 1946:182; Quattlebaum 1956:10-13). The Spanish Captain Ecija visited the area of the Santee River in 1609 and provided clues to their Siouan linguistic association (Swanton 1922:17-18; 1946:182).

The expedition which was to settle the first English town in South Carolina at Charles Towne landed at what is now Bull's Bay and

was received with ceremony by the Indians in the area (Cheves 1897: 166). When the colony at Charles Towne was established, the Sewee supplied the English with corn and other provisions (Cheves 1897:201).

On a map of 1682 a Sewee settlement was shown at the headwaters of "Ittuwan Creek," later to be known as the Wando River, with a Sewee village also shown there and on Bull's Bay on a map of 1695 (Gascoyne 1682; Thornton and Morden 1695). This map also reveals that the neighbors of the Sewee on the Wando River were the Wando and "Sompa" Indians, all within five miles of each other. When John Lawson traveled along Bull's Bay on January 1, 1701, he visited a deserted Indian village called Avendaugh-bough, which was apparently the Sewee village indicated on the 1695 map (Harriss 1952:4).

Lawson found the Sewee living along the Santee River a few miles from its mouth. He says they were formerly a large nation but were reduced by smallpox and rum. Most of their able-bodied men were lost some years before when they had built a fleet of canoes with mat sails and set out for England with a cargo of skins and furs so as to make more profit through bypassing the middle man. Half the fleet was lost in a storm and the others were picked up by a passing ship and sold as slaves in the West Indies (Harriss 1952:6-7).

In the Tuscarora War of 1711, some Sewee accompanied Barnwell on his expedition but deserted due to lack of ammunition (Milling 1969:221).

By 1715 the Sewee numbered 57 individuals in a single village 60 miles northeast of Charleston, probably in the area of the Black

and Sampit Rivers, north of the Santee where Lawson had seen them (Rivers 1874:94). The 1715 Moll map showing the Sewee Fort on the Wando River was copied from the 1695 map and is not necessarily the location of the Sewee at this time (Moll 1715; Thornton and Morden 1695).

#### Winyaw

The Winyaw Indians, supposedly Siouan, were located on Winyah Bay between the Black and the Pee Dee Rivers, and may have been the "Yenyohl" mentioned by Francisco of Chicora in 1521 (Swanton 1952: 103). They also may have been among those carried away as slaves by Ayllon's Captain Gordillo that same year (Quattlebaum 1956:10-12; Milling 1969:204-205). The "Wanniah" were friends of the first English to settle South Carolina at Charles Towne in 1670, but this friendship was shattered by slave dealers who instigated a war against them in 1683 as an excuse to capture slaves (Cheves 1897: 334; Milling 1969:85, 220; S. C. Records, B.P.R.P., vol. 1:256-259).

During the Tuscarora War of 1711, John Barnwell had 24 "Wineaws" on his expedition into North Carolina; however, they deserted before he arrived at his destination, pleading a lack of guns and ammunition (Salley 1908:30-31; Milling 1969:221). They were pressured by the Cheraw to join them in the Yamassee War against the English, but the Winyaw remained on friendly terms (Saunders 1886, vol. 2: 251-252). In 1715 the Winyaw were in a single village of 106 individuals, but by the following year a number of them were living on the Santee (Rivers 1874:94; McDowell 1955:80). On maps of 1695

and 1715, a Santee Indian Fort was located on the east bank of the Cooper River, near the present town of Moncks Corner (Thornton and Morden 1695:Caroliniana Library, U.S.C.; Moll 1715:S.C. Archives). After two years King Johnny and the Winyaw on the Santee returned to their old habitation to be near the trading house operated by Meredith Hughes at Uauenee (McDowell 1955:111, 208). With the Waccamaw move to the Black River in 1718, the Winyaw may have felt crowded, for they apparently helped the English in the Waccamaw War (Swanton 1946:207; Milling 1969:226-227). On a map of around 1722, they were located on the south side of the Pee Dee River (Catesby 1755, vol. 2:101; Cumming 1962:197).

#### Waccamaw

The Waccamaw Indians, a tribe presumed to be Siouan, lived along the Waccamaw, Pee Dee, and Lumber Rivers in North and South Carolina (Hodge 1910:887; Herbert 1725). A name possibly referring to the Waccamaw is of the 1521 exploration of the South Carolina coast by Gordillo when an Indian province known as Guacaya (Waccaya in English) was reported (Swanton 1922:36-38). Gordillo took 140 captives from this area of the river they called St. John the Baptist (Waccamaw River at Winyah Bay) in the land called Chiora (Quattlebaum 1956:11-12).

It was not until the Tuscarora War that the Waccamaw tribe or the river carrying their name was mentioned (Winsor 1887, vol. 5: 346). Barnwell urged encouraging the "Wachamau" and the Cape Fear

Indians to assist him in the war against the Tuscarora (Lee 1965:77; Barnwell 1909:43). In the Yamassee War of 1715 the Cheraw pressured the Waccamaw to join them in their conflict with the English and supplied them with guns (Saunders 1886, vol. 2:251-252). In that same year Maurice Moore learned of an ambush planned by the Cape Fear and Waccamaw Indians against his force and struck their town, taking many prisoners (Lee 1965:80-81). At this time they numbered 610 individuals in four towns, probably located between the Waccamaw and Pee Dee Rivers (Rivers 1874:91). By 1716 they had renewed their friendship with the English, and a trading post named "Uauenee" or "Your Enee" was established near them for their convenience (McDowell 1955:80, 96, 111, 174). The post (probably located near the community of "Yauhannah" west of the Pee Dee-Waccamaw River junction) was abandoned the following year for fear of the Cheraw (McDowell 1955:202; S.C.U.S.G.S., Yauhannah Quadrangle 1943).

Within six months, in April, 1718, the Waccamaw were reported to be allied with the Cheraw with an aim of making war against the colonists and had moved closer to the English settlements on the south side of the Black River to better effect this goal (McDowell 1955:264). The result was a war between the English and the Waccamaw, which resulted in 60 Waccamaw's being killed or taken prisoner. They were living between the Black and Sampit Rivers at Winyah Bay at this time and were said to number not above 100 men (Milling 1969:226-227; S. C. Records, B.P.R.O., vol. 8:25-26). The

survivors of this war, according to a 1725 map, moved away from the English settlements up the Little Pee Dee and settled east of the Cheraw on the south side of the Lumber River in the area later to become Robeson County, North Carolina (Herbert 1725).

In 1755 some Waccamaw and Pedee Indians were murdered in the White settlements by Natchez and Cherokee (McDowell 1970:86). However, a number of them may have remained at the location last indicated by the Herbert Map of 1725, isolated on the rich loam between the swamps of the Lumber and the Pee Dee Rivers, where the Lumbee are located today.

#### Cape Fear Indians

The Indians living near the mouth of the Cape Fear River were seen by Verrazano in 1524 (Lee 1965:69; Lefler 1948:2). Two years later Ayllon with his cavalry explored the area and no doubt met the local Indians (Quattlebaum 1956:18-23). When William Hilton visited the Charles River [Cape Fear River] with other New Englanders in 1662, he saw about 100 friendly Indians, whom he described as "very poor and silly Creatures" (Lee 1965:70; Shapley 1662). As a result of Hilton's exploration, a group of New Englanders arrived in the spring of 1663 to establish a colony. However, they did not stay long and abandoned their effort, leaving a notice posted at the mouth of the river to discourage other attempts at settlement (Lee 1965:32-33; Salley 1959:53). In the fall of the same year, Hilton returned to search for a settlement site for a group of Barbadians and for cattle abandoned by the New

Englishmen. He was well treated by the Cape Fear Indians, and visited their village Necoes (Salley 1959:45-46). Hilton had one small incident to mar his otherwise pleasant visit when an Indian shot an arrow at his boat, for which act he evened the score by destroying the Indian's hut and pots, platters, spoons, and mats (Salley 1959:50). Hilton purchased the river and lands of Cape Fear from the Indian Wattcoosa and others who appeared to him to be the chief men of the area (Salley 1959:52). While in the Cape Fear region, Hilton was supplied with fish, corn, and acorns by the Indians as well as beef and pork, which they had acquired when the New Englanders had abandoned their colonization effort a few months before (Salley 1959:45-53).

From May 29, 1664 to 1667, a settlement known as Charles Towne was located on the west bank of the Cape Fear River, under the leadership of John Vassell. During this time a war with the Cape Fear Indians arose over enslavement of the Indians, during which the colonist's cattle were taken, a serious blow to the food supply at Charles Towne (Lee 1965:50; Salley 1959:66; Saunders 1886:159). Over one-half century would pass following the abandonment of Charles Towne before a new European settlement known as Brunswick would be established on the Cape Fear (North Carolina Land Grants, vol. 2:272-273). Until their submission to the government of South Carolina in the 1690's, the Cape Fear Indians (who were never known by a tribal name) became known as "the most barbarous of any in the province" due to their

treatment of survivors of ships wrecked on the Cape Fear shoals (Lee 1965:76).

During the Tuscarora War, Colonel John Barnwell led an expedition, early in 1711, into North Carolina to put down the uprising on the Neuse River. With him were representatives of many South Carolina tribes, including 11 Cape Fears (Salley 1908:28, 31). When the Yamassee War began in 1715, Colonel Maurice Moore led a North Carolina company to aid South Carolina; learning of a planned attack by Cape Fear and Waccamaw Indians, he struck their towns, seized their arms and ammunition, and took many prisoners, but was able to keep only 80 (Lee 1965:80-81). At the beginning of the same year, the Cape Fear numbered only 206 individuals in five towns (Rivers 1874:91). Moore's attack devastated them; and, in 1717, they, along with the Waccamaw and Winyaw, renewed their friendship with the English. Their weakened condition exposed them to raids by the Seneca and Tuscarora, and by 1723 they had sought refuge with the Winyaw. In 1749 an executive order by the Governor of South Carolina forbade their molestation by White colonists, who were driving them from their hunting grounds. The last remnants of the tribe were living with the Pedee a few years later (Lee 1965:82-83).

#### Congaree

This small tribe is known to have spoken a different dialect from the Catawba but is usually included with the Siouan tribes



because of its close association with them (Hodge 1907:338). An early mention of the tribe was made by the Cherokee in 1693 when they complained that the Congaree, Catawba, and Savannah had captured and enslaved some Cherokee (Milling 1969:269). John Lawson found them in 1701 in a village of about a dozen houses likely located on the west side of the Congaree River, where their village is placed on a map showing Barnwell's route of 1711, on which he was accompanied by 13 Congarees and Santees (Harriss 1952:24; Barnwell 1909:33; Salley 1908:31).

In 1715 there were only 22 men in the Congaree village, and these joined other Siouan tribes in fighting the English in the Yammassee War later the same year and continued their hostility until 1716 (Milling 1969:61, 222). As a result, their number was severely reduced and they moved in with the Catawba where "Cangaree" is listed as a Catawba dialect by Adair in 1743 (Milling 1969:223, 225; Williams 1930:xi, 236).

The site of their town became an important trading center and frontier garrison from 1717 to 1722, the area being known as the "Congarees" long after the tribe became part of the body of the Catawba (Meriwether 1940:11-12; Williams 1930:ix).

#### Wateree

The earliest record of this tribe is provided by the account of the Spaniard Juan Pardo who visited the Cheraw, the Catawba, and the Wateree or "Guatari" in 1566 and 1567 and built a fort

among them, later destroyed by the Indians. On his second trip Pardo visited the "Little Wateree" or Wateree Chickanee, known to the Spaniards as "Guatariatiqui," and again visited the Wateree. The Wateree Chickanee were located on the Saluda River near the later town of Dyson, South Carolina, a few miles east of Ninety Six, and the Wateree were on the Broad River near the mouth of Indian Creek, north of the later town of Newberry (Swanton 1936:377-379).

The Wateree were visited by John Lederer in 1670, who found them on the upper Uwharrie River tributary to the Yadkin River in North Carolina, 40 miles from the Sara (Cheraw) which he found on the Dan River. The Wateree location is indicated on the 1770 Collet Map as "Wharee" Creek, an apparent version of Wateree now known as the Uwharrie River (Lederer 1902:19; Collet 1770; Swanton 1936:379). This and Sara place names surviving in the area reveal that the Sara (Cheraw) and Watary (Wateree) were on the Dan and upper Yadkin Rivers at this time. The Wisacky (Waxhaw), and Ushery (Catawba) were found by Lederer three days travel to the South, probably on the Catawba River on which they were located when visited by Lawson 30 years later (Harriss 1952:40).

The Wateree are shown on John Locke's map of 1671, with a river of that name, apparently the Pee Dee, shown on the Gascoyne map of 1682 as well as other seventeenth century maps (Cumming 1962:pl. 35, 39). In 1701 John Lawson found the Wateree Chickanee south of the Catawba, on the present Wateree River, and said they were far more numerous than the Congaree (Harriss 1952:28). Their

location is shown on a map revealing the 1711 route of Barnwell's expedition to North Carolina, on which he took 28 Wateree Indians (Barnwell 1909:33). This map reveals the Wateree village on the west side of the Wateree River, probably in the area of Wateree Creek, south of Great Falls. By 1717, following the Yamassee War, some of the Wateree were living among the Catawba (McDowell 1955:177), but they retained their tribal separation at least until 1736, when they were still living on their traditional land between the Wateree and Congaree Rivers. By 1743, however, they were said by Adair to form a large town among the Catawba, which is shown on a 1750 map just south of the Catawba (Bierer 1969:14-15). In 1744 they sold their tribal land between the Wateree and Congaree Rivers to the trader Thomas Brown, and from this time on their way became one with the Catawba (Williams 1930:236; Milling 1969:225).

#### Santee

The Santee Indians were first mentioned by the Spanish explorer Ecija in 1609 when he rescued a Frenchman living among these "Sati" Indians on the Santee River (Swanton 1922:17). When the first colonists to South Carolina arrived at Charles Towne in 1670, they soon found the Santee Indians among their friends (Cheves 1897:334). A map of 1695 reveals a "Santee Indian Fort" on the Cooper River near the future site of Moncks Corner, and in 1701 Lawson found Santee Indian plantations scattered for many miles along the Santee River, one of which was known as Hickerau, or the black house (Thornton and Morden 1695; Harriss 1952:13, 19).

During the Tuscarora War of 1711 a few Santees accompanied Barnwell on his expedition against the Tuscarora in North Carolina (Salley 1908:31). By 1715 the Santee were reduced to less than 100 individuals in two villages (Rivers 1874:94). The Yamassee War further reduced them as they took up arms against the English, and in 1716 the colonists were still trying to subdue the Santee and the Congaree, culminating in half of these tribes' being sent to the West Indies as slaves (Swanton 1922:71; Bartram 1928:69; Hodge 1910:461). By the fall of the same year trader, Captain Bartholomew Gaillard, was at Santee in charge of trade with the Winyaw Indians then settled there (McDowell 1955:115-208). In December, 1716, it was reported that some Santee Indians had murdered some of the Summers family and were apprehended (McDowell 1955:138). The survivors of the tribe after this time are not important enough for the English to mention, a fact supporting the document stating that by the end of 1716 the Santee and some other small tribes had been utterly extirpated (Milling 1969:223).

### Summary

The historic and protohistoric Carolina Lowland tribes from the Cape Fear to the Congaree were oriented by their seasonal riverine environment to an agricultural-hunting-gathering economy. They appear to have had fewer traits of a southern chiefdom tradition than did their Piedmont neighbors, the Waxhaw and Catawba. This difference is seen in the contrast between the Wateree and Waxhaw. There were linguistic differences also with the neighboring Congaree and Wateree not understanding each other's language.

The structures built by the Carolina Lowland tribes varied also from the huge, seventeenth-century communal, coastal buildings thatched with palmetto to the early eighteenth-century round, cypress bark covered, multiple family "cabins" further inland to the "dark smoky Holes" of the Wateree Chickanee to the west. Cultural variation within the area of these tribes is also seen on the prehistoric level, when a cord and fabric marked pottery and burial mound tradition dominated the area of the Cape Fear and a complicated-stamped, temple mound, ceremonial center, South Appalachian Mississippian cultural tradition extended on a front from the present Charleston northward across the Santee River into North Carolina.

The Santee custom of platform burial and subsequent removal of the flesh and storage of the bones in boxes is a widespread southern, chiefdom-associated trait, as were feathered garments. Although the Waxhaw come nearer to our preconceived expectations as a cultural descent candidate for the South Appalachian

Mississippian culture represented by the ceremonial centers from Charles Towne to Fort Watson on the Santee, and along the Wateree River, the Santee Indians may also represent such a descent group. The Wateree, on the other hand, fit our expectations as a representative of the indigenous cultural base in the Carolina Lowland.

The Carolina Lowland Indian tribes have been linguistically classified as Eastern Siouan primarily on the basis of indirect evidence. Cultural interpretations have sometimes been erroneously assumed to follow these same lines. The prehistoric remains point to a cultural subarea in northeastern South Carolina and southeastern North Carolina (South 1960, 1971) outside the major flow of Mississippian culture traits. The historical documents appear to reflect this phenomenon with fewer southern chiefdom traits in the Carolina Lowlands than among the Piedmont tribes. Archeology should bring a clearer delineation of this area of prehistoric and historic cultural blend, allowing specific correlations to be made between ethnological and archeological evidence for better definition of this area of culture change, a project yet to be undertaken.

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